

REMARKS

The attorney for the Applicant would like to express his sincere appreciation to Examiner Jacob Minskey for the courtesies shown during the telephone conference on September 14, 2010. During the telephone conference the newly cited reference to Sagawa et al. (JP 02295706 A) was discussed. Although the Sagawa et al. reference discloses a mold having segments 3 with narrow dimension slits extending from the radially inner molding surface and larger gaps 8 extending to the outer radial extent of the mold, it is respectfully submitted that the larger gaps 8 are not directly connected with the smaller slits 6 but rather, that air being vented through the slits 6 must first pass through the circumferential passageway 7 before reaching the larger gaps 8.

Although the reference to Sagawa et al. does not explicitly set forth the precise flow path for vented air from the slit 6 at the interior of the mold to the larger outlet passageway 8, it is respectfully submitted that the flow path must be from the slits 6 to the circumferential passageway 7 and then to the radially extending outlet passageways 8. This reasoning is reinforced by the fact that, if the flow path for the vented air were directly from the slits 6 to the radial passageway 8, there would be no reason to have the circumferential passageway 7 in the mold.

The claims have been amended to clearly set forth this feature of the larger

second gaps extending directly from and connected with the first gaps. This is in addition to the alignment feature of the first and second gaps previously included in the claims. Support for the amendment may be found at page 4, line 16 of the specification which reads "... and extending from, and connecting with, the gaps to the outer radius ...". In view of the foregoing and in view of the limitation in the claims that the second gaps (vent passages 22) are directly connected to the smaller first gaps 20 or, in the case of claim 21, "connecting with," it is respectfully submitted that the claims are unobvious to a person skilled in the art and are, therefore, patentable.

Reconsideration of the application and allowance of claims 1 – 3, 5 – 10, 13 and 21 – 30 are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner believes that the addition of another feature would render the claims clearer, the attorney for the Applicant would be willing to further amend the independent claims to include the limitations of "... with no intermediate

passageways ..." with respect to the first gaps and the second gaps connecting therewith.

Respectfully submitted,

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